

## Traveling with Needles

Don't forget, safe needle disposal is important no matter where you are at—home, at work, or on the road. Never place used needles in the trash or flush them down the toilets in hotel rooms, on airplanes, or in public restrooms, where they could injure the cleaning staff or other people.

### Sharps and Air Travel

Before you fly, check the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Web site ([www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov)) for up-to-date—rules on what to do with your needles when you travel. Be prepared—ask about options for safe needle disposal when you make travel reservations, board an airplane, or check into a hotel or cruise ship. If you aren't sure that needle containers will be available where you're going be sure to buy a needle container that you can take with you to hold your used needles until you can dispose of the needles the right way.



WASTEWATER UTILITY DIVISION  
Pollution Prevention (p2) Program  
4201 2ND STREET SW  
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87105

Phone: 505-873-7058  
Fax: 505-873-6975  
Email: [blujan@cabq.gov](mailto:blujan@cabq.gov)

## Protect Yourself, Protect Others

### Best Management Practices for Home Needle Disposal



A 44 year old wastewater treatment operator working at his station is stuck with a needle flushed into the toilet. A year later, his doctor tells him that he has caught Hepatitis C, probably from being stuck by the needle. Doctors have not been able to help him, and he is now in chronic liver failure. It's not just wastewater treatment operators who are at risk of needle sticks—it's also trash collectors, neighbors, children, janitors, housekeepers, and pets. That's why used needles **should not be thrown in the garbage, or in the sewer.**

## Best Management Practices for Disposal of Medical Sharps Generated in Private Residences

### Drop-Off Collection Sites

The State of New Mexico offers collection sites that accept used needles for free for **private residences only**.

Visit [nmenv.state.nm.us/swb/needledisposal.htm](http://nmenv.state.nm.us/swb/needledisposal.htm) for a complete list.

New Mexico **Public Health Offices (PHO)** offer this service. The sites in Albuquerque include:

Stanford PHO

1111 Stanford NE  
841-4100

Northwest Valley PHO

7704 2nd St. NW  
897-5700

Southwest Valley PHO

2001 N. Centro Familiar SW  
8  
873-7478

New Mexico AIDS Services

625 Truman St. NE  
938-7100



### Mail-Back Service

You can buy this service, which comes with a needle container, and mail back packaging. The price usually depends on the size of the container you pick. You fill the needle container with your used needles and mail it back in the package that is provided by the company. The list of companies below may not be complete. Contact the p2 Program if you would like to add your company to this list;

BD™ Home Sharps by Mail  
available at Rite Aid drugstores nation wide.  
For information call 1-888-BDCARES  
(1-888-232-2737)  
[www.safeneedledisposal.org/ds/BD\\_sdbm.html](http://www.safeneedledisposal.org/ds/BD_sdbm.html)

#### Sharps Compliance, Inc.

9350 Kirby Dr., Suite 300  
Houston, Texas 77054  
Tel: (713) 432-0300  
Fax: (713) 432-055

<http://www.sharpsinc.com/>

Stericycle Bio Systems Sharps Management

Tel (505)228-4799

<http://www.stericycle.com/bio.html>

### Other Disposal Options

Place the sharps in a used bottle of bleach or detergent bottle with some bleach. Label the bottle **“Sharps”**. You may also use a Home Needle Destruction Device to destroy needles at home. Destruction devices burn, melt or cut off the needle-making it safe to dispose of needles in solid waste.



Another option is to place the needles in a coffee can, and fill the can with plaster of paris, or concrete thus encapsulating the needles. You can also use the Home Needle Destruction Device before you place the sharps in the can. You can visit the New Mexico Environment Department's web page for more information at:

[nmenv.state.nm.us/swb/needledisposal.htm](http://nmenv.state.nm.us/swb/needledisposal.htm)

Ask your healthcare provider or local pharmacist if they can dispose of your used needles.

To learn more about rules regarding medical waste disposal consult EPA's Medical Waste Web site at:

[www.epa.gov/epaoswer/other/medical](http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/other/medical)

The information in this pamphlet is based on the EPA pamphlet **Recommended Needle Disposal Options for Self Injectors.**

Please keep in mind the p2 Program does not recommend, endorse, or promote any particular company, method, or technique. The information in this pamphlet is furnished as a public service.